

internet
teapot



ISSUE 5 - APRIL 2021

ALGORITHMS OF LATE-CAPITALISM

SHIFTING THE POWER

*A zine that sits uncomfortably at the intersection of digital technology,
a global free-market economy, and popular culture.*



moz://a
festival

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Yung & Srulj

Cover design includes remixed works of artist
Signe Pierce

Share • Distribute • Remix



98% of cat owners in
your neighborhood have
already bought a
vest for their cats - have you?

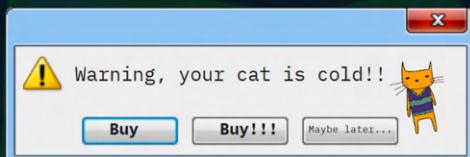
Join the CAT NETWORK,

the cutting edge social
platform for the latest catty
gossip, cat casual wear, and
feline video content - first of
its kind in the
World Wide Web!



♪ ♪
A cold cat
No more of that
A cool cat
Yo-o-our cat
♪ ♪

Use the code COOLCATVESTS
for a one-time-only 20% discount!!



EDITORIAL

Algorithms of Late-Capitalism: Issue 5 _ April 2021 Shifting The Power

*In this era of increased reliance on
algorithmic systems that we can't
see and don't control, how do we
shift the power back to the citizen?*

From simple ad-trackers to
complex machine learning
recommendation systems, the
algorithms pervading our online
lives increasingly mediate our
ability to participate in the public
sphere. But who designs, owns,
and deploys these algorithms? For
whom do they discreetly (or not
so discreetly!) exercise power?
Whose economic interests do
they serve in the end? And how
does our personal data come into
play as the invisible currency we
pay to participate in digital public

life? We need to rethink the role
that we have as citizens in this
unfolding algorithmic ecosystem.

By knowing where, how, and to
which effects algorithmic systems
influence our lives – we can
start finding ways to reconfigure
our relationships with the
systems pervading our digitizing
public sphere. By interrogating
and critically examining the
underpinnings of these systems,
from our unique perspectives,
we can shift the power from the
pervading technocracies back to
the citizens.



This zine was created by internet teapot (Karla
Zavala and Adriaan Odendaal) and participants
of the workshop: "Algorithms of Late-Capitalism:
Zine Co-creation Workshop" that took place at
the Mozilla Festival on 17 March 2021

www.internetteapot.com
algorithmsoflatecapitalism.tumblr.com

COMPUTER VISION

Machines are seeing, sensing, and listening to our world in ways that our very different than ours: a machine gaze of computational models and data-structure.

If we can put ourselves in the perspective of the machines, maybe we can better understand how they process the world and consequently exercise power?



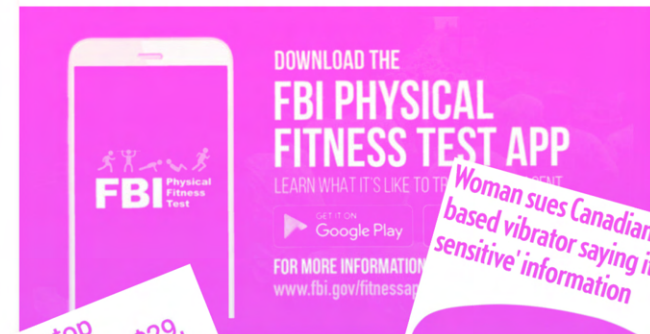
Amazon thinks my recent humidifier purchase was merely the inaugural move in a newfound hobby of humidifier collecting.

Uhh, Google Assistant Impersonating a Human on the Phone Is Scary as Hell to Me

Microsoft's New 'Productivity Score' Lets Your Boss Monitor How Often You Use Email And Attend Video Meetings



The FBI is promoting an at-home exercise app that also tracks your phone's location and data



Want your partner to stop smoking? Or buy a dog? For \$29, this online service will provide you with a targeted campaign to help you get an idea into someone else's head



Woman sues Canadian maker of app-based vibrator saying it collects 'highly sensitive' information

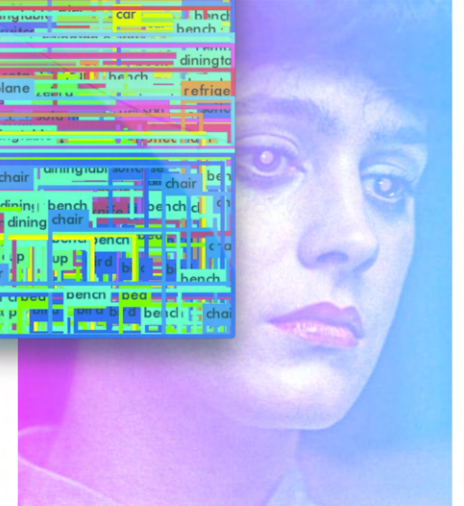


Creepy Stalker

It's kind of creepy when you see the same ad pop-up wherever you go online. Or perhaps you suspect Alexa or Siri is eavesdropping on your conversations? Companies like Google and Facebook use an array of ad tracking, targeting, and delivery algorithms. Their power lies in the vast amounts of personal data these algorithms collect, process, and turn into behavioral models related to you.

“What are the political consequences of automated systems that use labels to classify humans, including by race, gender, emotions, ability, sexuality, and personality? Computer vision systems make judgements, and decisions, and as such exercise power to shape the world in their own images, which, in turn, is built upon flattening generalities and embedded social bias.”

- **Mitra Azar, Geoff Cox & Leonardo Impett**
Introduction: ways of machine seeing



a world made only of speckled cows
 a world made only of speckled cows
 a world made only of speckled cows
 a world made only of speckled cows



DAY 289



morning: an albatros appeared
 in dataset[32][45][9]. i
 greeted her with a friendly
 activation of my perceptrons.

midday: i enjoyed the beatles
 in the 81st epoch. the gray of
 their hair will make good
 insulation for my winter
 shelter

evening: taking notes. tomorrow
 will be a turbulent day. i am a
 blessed child of the Pipeline.

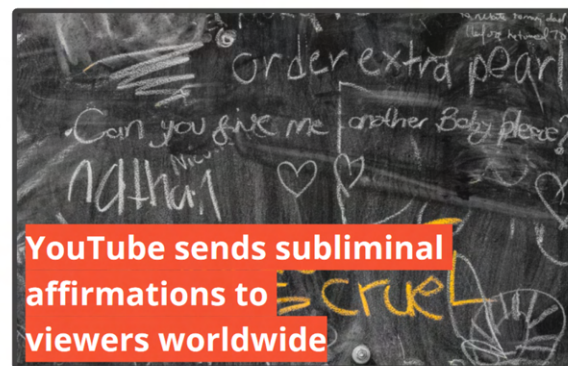


IMAGINE TURE

Data Feminism
 hacker tribes, anthropocentrism, piramide of
 internet classes



AI used to facilitate
 Intergenerational Healing



YouTube sends subliminal
 affirmations to
 viewers worldwide



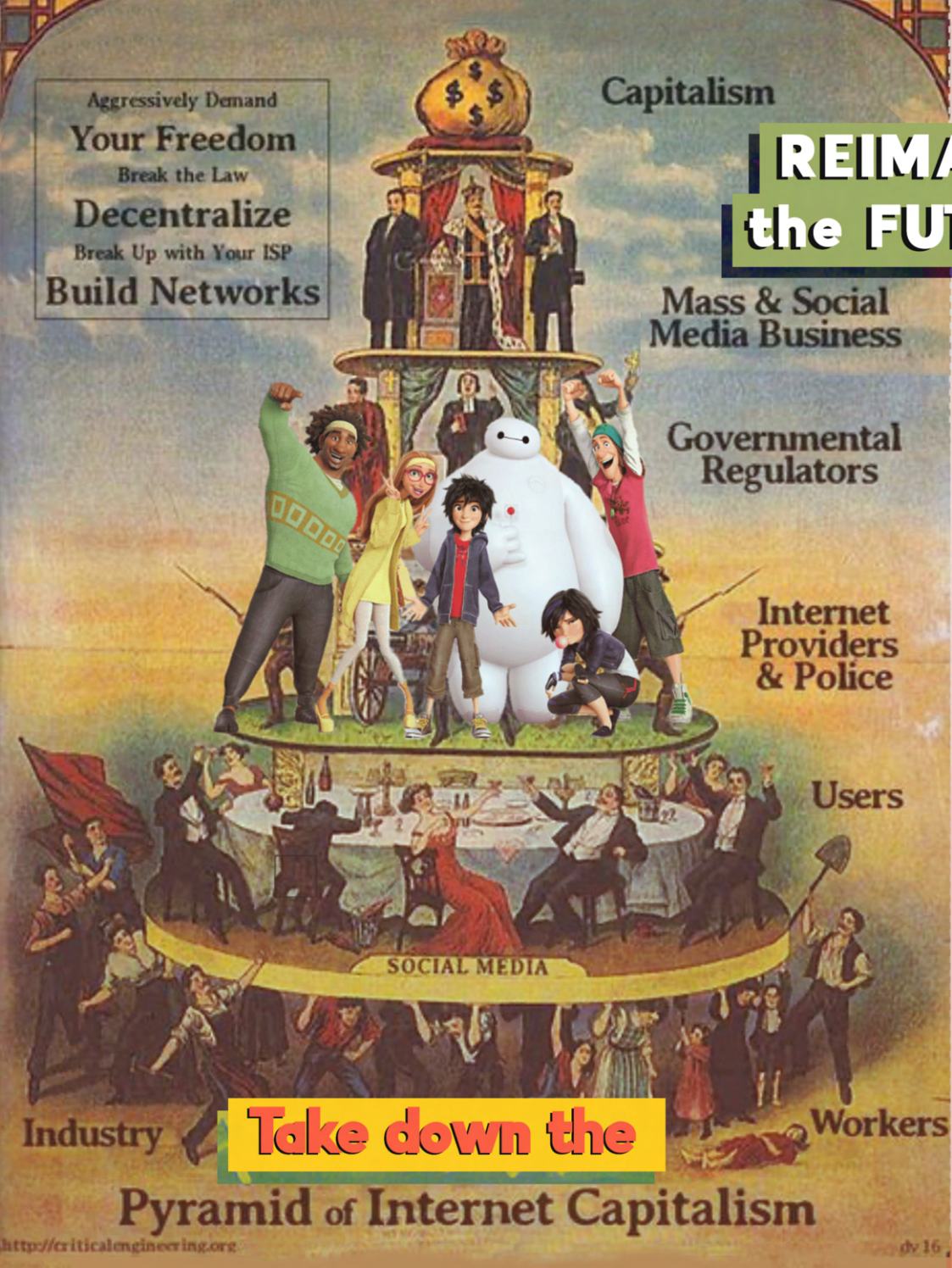
Tech-facilitates social-
 emotional development

The good idea service

rewriting the headlines to invite people towards positive actions (instead of
 highlighting disasters)

adding subliminal messages to horrible but popular YouTube videos ;
 affirmations that invite healing

Kim Stanley Robinson's SF works!!! all of them :-)
 Córry Doctorow & Charlie Stross are talking at
 World Ethical Data Forum this Friday!



DAY 900
DAY 900
----- DAY 900



i am seeing spots.
i am seeing spots.
i am seeing spots.

DAY 289 DAY 289 DAY 289

midday: an albatros appeared in beared in
st[32][45][9]. i greeted her eeted her
With a friendly activation of my lonCoFvmy
perceptrons. ceptrons; ceptrons.

midday: i enjoyed the beatles in atlöseine
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hair will make good insulation insulation su
for my winter shelter shelter shelter

evening: taking notes. tomorrow tomorrow to
will be a turbulent day. i am a vlinamday
blesse the Pipeline. Pipeline Pipe



ALGORITHMIC SAFARI

Algorithms are difficult to spot in the wild. They can usually be found hiding behind user-friendly interfaces and unassuming flat icons. A good way to spot them is to pay close attention to what is going on on your screen and think of everything you see in terms of: inputs → data processing → outputs.

An existing community, in the making of the new group - Catalyst Lab, culturalcatalystnetwork.com

Kim Stanley Robinson's SF works!!! all of them ;-)

Córry Doctorow & Charlie Stross are talking at World Ethical Data Forum this Friday!

My own "community" = mailing list, called UnCivilization; www.unciv.nl

Data Feminism

hacker tribes, anthropocentrism, piramide of internet classes



SPECULATIVE FUTURES__

Speculative design is an exercise in which we imagine radical future technologies as a way to critically reflect on or respond to our technological present. This method provides an optimal creative space to imagine new possibilities for “how things could be” and to start building better futures. All you have to do is start asking “what if” questions...

What Kind of Algorithms to Look for:

Prioritization: Emphasizes or brings attention to certain things at the expense of others. Embedded in every algorithm that seeks to prioritize are criteria, or metrics, which are computed and used to define the ranking through a sorting procedure.

Classification: Categorizes a particular entity by looking at any number of that entity's features.

Association: Marks relationships between entities and involve grouping entities into clusters.

Filtering: Involves including or excluding information according to various rules or criteria.

- **Nicholas Diakopolous**

*Algorithmic Accountability Reporting:
On the Investigation of Black Boxes*

Algos in the Wild

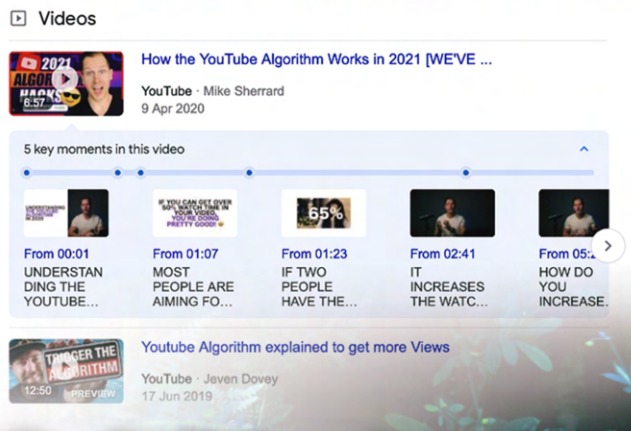
Algorithm-Obsessed Creatives Losing their Creativity

Creators make choices based on what they believe the algorithm will reward

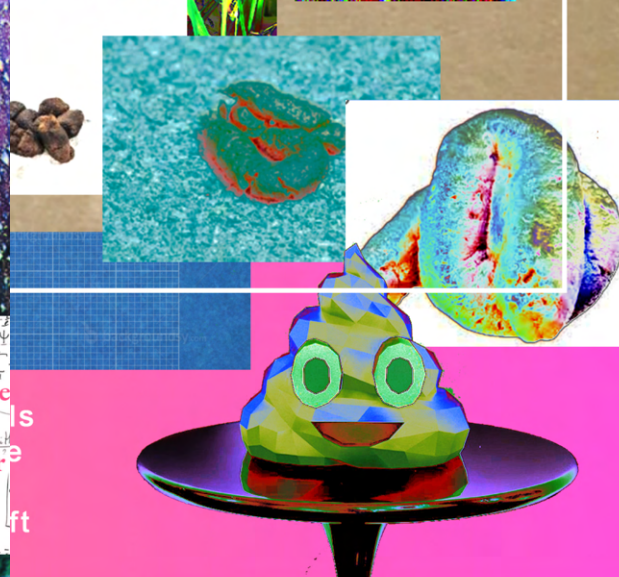
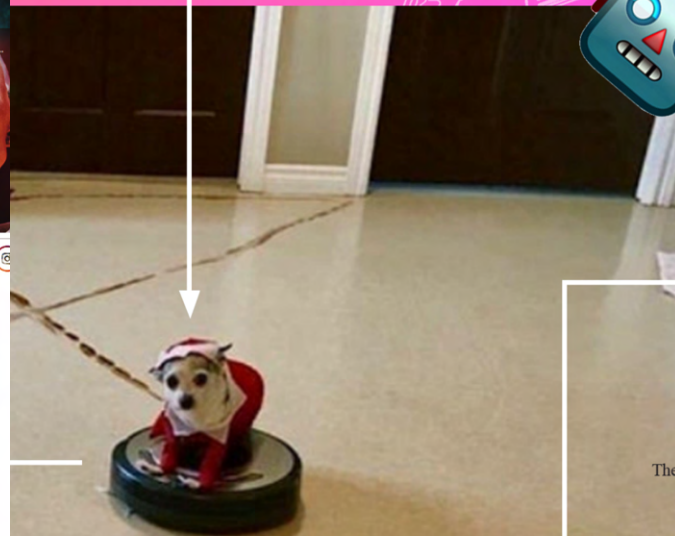
Creators implore their followers to help them "beat" the algorithm

Content becomes convergent, creators feel falsely empowered

Algorithm as a dominant co-creator on social media?



lem:



sollution :
dataset diversity
MORE POOP!

The illustrated General Data Protection Regulation:
Transparency in the context of AI

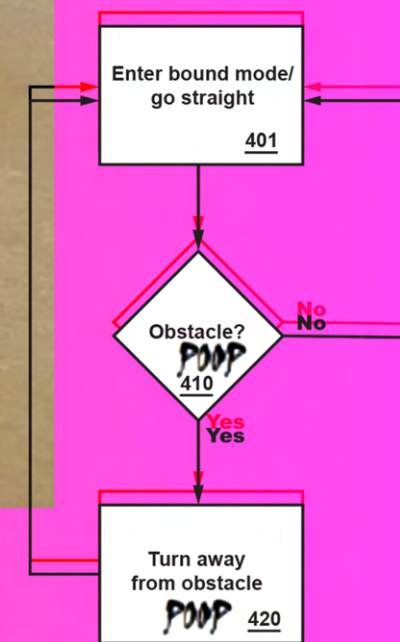


FIG. 10

Case study: iRobot
Method and system for multi-mode coverage for an
autonomous robot: Patent US6809490B2

www.thecopyriots.com

The illustrated General Data Protection Regulation:
Transparency in the context of AI

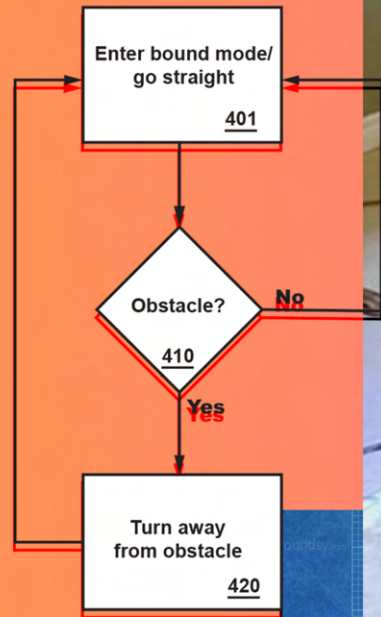
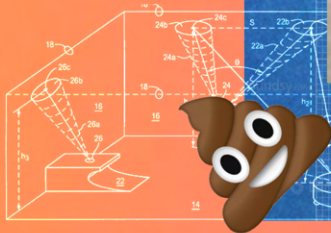


FIG. 10

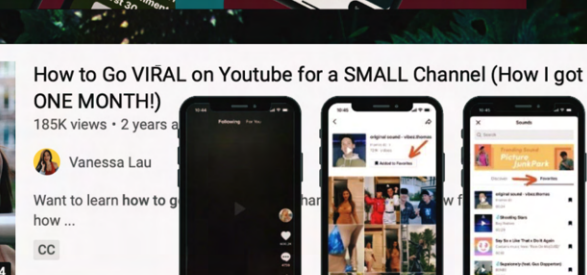
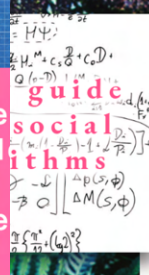
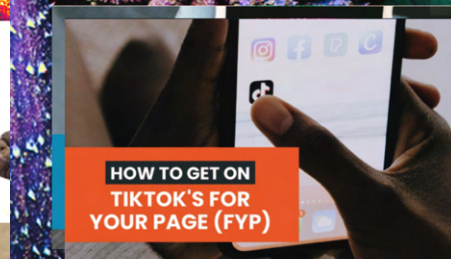
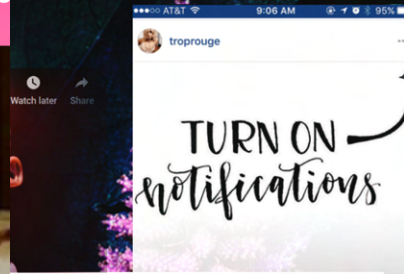
Case study: iRobot
Method and system for multi-mode coverage for an
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www.thecopyriots.com



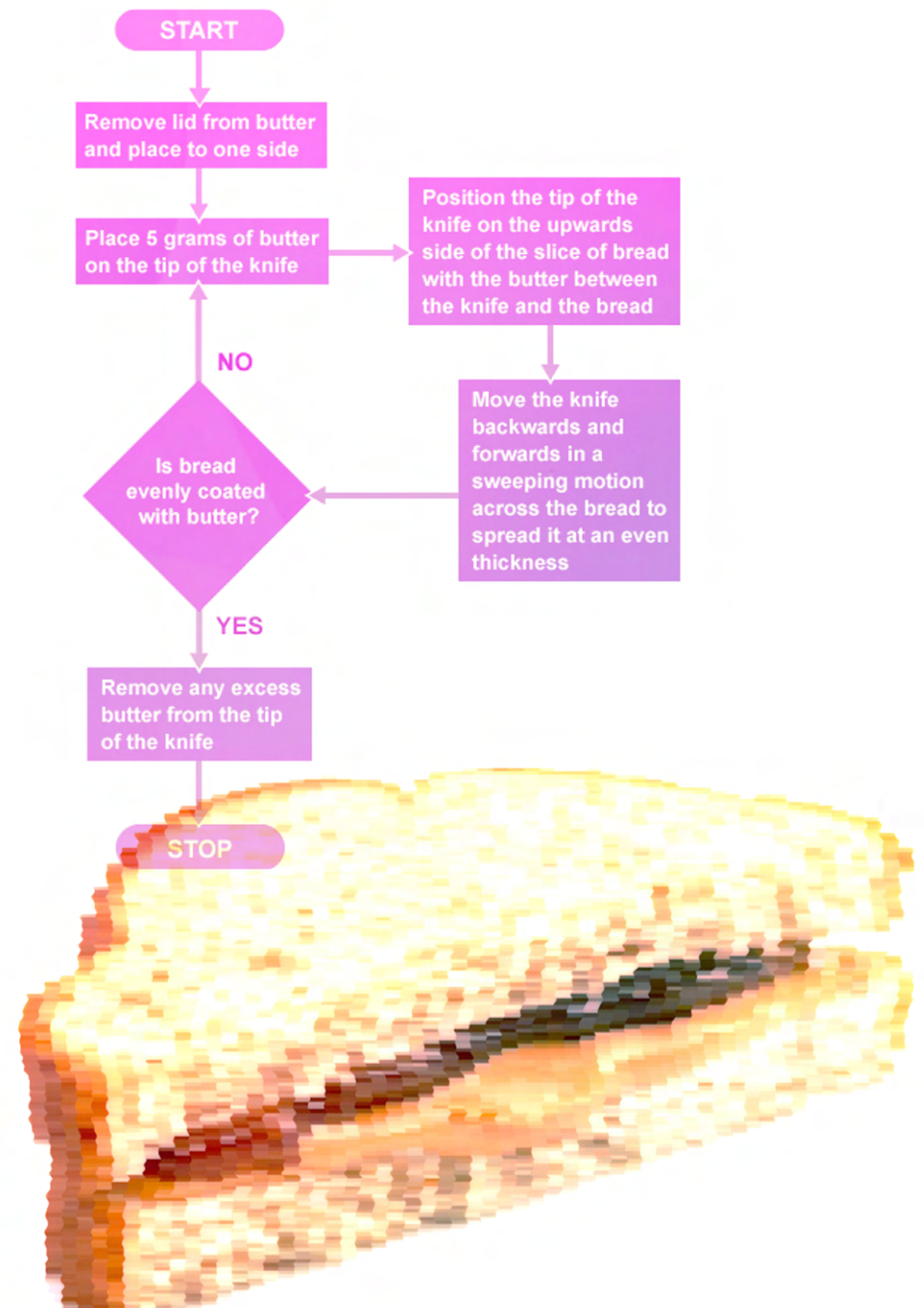
real world's complexity = POOP

"There would always be mistakes, because [algorithmic] models are, by their very nature, simplifications. No model can include all of the real world's complexity or the nuance of human communication. Inevitably, some important information gets left out." - Cathy O'Neil



GRAPH YOUR ALGORITHM

From the moment you check your messages in the morning, to checking train times on Google maps, to binging Netflix before going to sleep - you are interacting with thousands of algorithmic software systems every day! Its consequently very easy to stop paying attention to which systems you rely on... and who benefits most from this reliance.



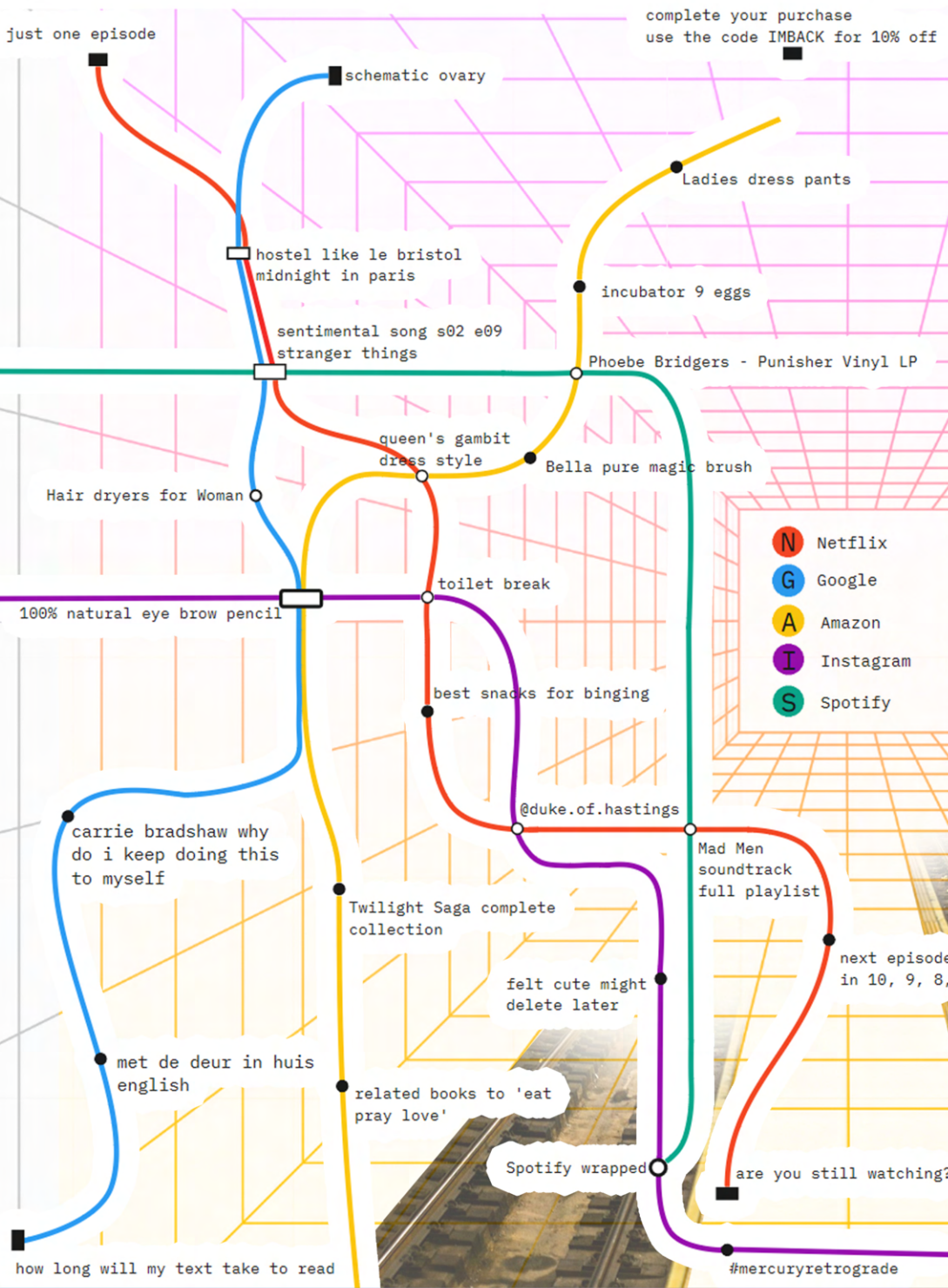
One of the traditional ways of teaching people how algorithms work is through doing an exercise in which you have to instruct a computer on how to make a sandwich. You break the process into detailed computational steps and hope for the best! This exercise invariably demonstrates that computers need to be told exactly what to do - leave out a single step and unexpected disaster may ensue!

One of the traditional ways of teaching people how algorithms work is through doing an exercise in which you have to instruct a computer on how to make a sandwich. You break the process into detailed computational steps and hope for the best! This exercise invariably demonstrates that computers need to be told exactly what to do - leave out a single step and unexpected disaster may ensue!



“Software is what organizes the Internet, routing email messages, delivering Web pages from a server, switching network traffic, assigning IP addresses, and rendering Web pages in a browser. The school and the hospital, the military base and the scientific laboratory, the airport and the city — all social, economic, and cultural systems of modern society — run on software. Software is the invisible glue that ties it all together.”

- Lev Manovich
Software Takes Command



Thought the MTA was a drag? Meet the Metropolitan Transit Algorithms!

Start with an innocent Google search and before you know it you are the proud (unsure?) owner of an incubator that fits 9 whole eggs. Perhaps you were just listening to Spotify but realised you need that snazzy Phoebe Bridgers EP on vinyl - now you're on Amazon (wondering why there are so many egg-related ads...?). Watching Stranger Things on Netflix might just connect you to the Green and Blue lines because what song is playing in that one scene in the final episode? What you thought was just one episode is now you wondering whether you can buy the Bella pure magic brush because mercury is in retrograde??

Is that a rat on the tracks?! Aaah! Don't get lost, check your algorithm route before venturing onto the tracks!

